

The Brooks County Board of Commissioners met for its Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, July 13, 2020 at 5:00 p.m., in the Auditorium at the Brooks County Ag/Extension Building located at 400 East Courtland Avenue, Quitman, GA. Commissioners present were: Mr. James Maxwell, Chairman; Mr. Patrick Folsom, Vice Chairman; Mr. Willie Cody; Ms. Myra Exum; and Mr. Rhett Rowe. Others present were: Ms. Jessica McKinney, Administrator; Ms. Patricia Williams, County Clerk; Mr. James Burchett, County Attorney; and various residents.

### **Public Hearing**

**Timothy Kelly – Yard Variance** – Mr. Billy Ingram, Brooks County Zoning and Inspections; presented a request for a front yard variance of 28 feet (100-72=28) by Timothy Kelly. The property is located at 12986 Moultrie Highway in unincorporated Brooks County. The property is the Southeastern Agricultural Lab. The business is needing to extend the existing building for additional office space which would not extend any closer than the existing buildings. The Brooks County Planning Commission met on June 30, 2020 and approved the request. The SGRC Staff recommended approval of the requested variance because the request meets the strict standards of hardship and uniqueness and would not extend any further than the existing buildings.

A sign-in sheet was provided; but no one was there to speak for or against the request.

Chairman closed the Public Hearing at 5:05 pm.

**1. Call to Order** – Chairman called the meeting to order.

**A. Prayer & Pledge** – Pastor Derren Yearby led all in attendance in prayer and pledge of allegiance.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

On the motion by Mr. Folsom, seconded by Mr. Cody, the Board unanimously approved to amend the agenda to include:

Bids for Road Department Equipment and Vehicles under New Business as Item F. Vote was unanimous.

Mr. Folsom made the motion to strike from Item E (SPLOST Update/TSPLOST Projects Discussion) items a, b, and c, Ms. Exum seconded. Vote was unanimous.

Ms. Exum motioned to approve the agenda for July 13, 2020 Regular Monthly Meeting with the amendments, Mr. Folsom seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**3. Reports from Committees/Departments**

**A. Mike Smith, EMA Director – Report on COVID-19 Activities and Current State of County** – Mr. Smith reported the number change daily. The numbers announced are

numbers that have been tested, not positive. The cases are up; the number of deaths are down.

**B. Erin Blanton, Family Connection – Census Full Count Committee Update**

The date has been extended for Census forms until October due to COVID-19, which slowed the process. The hard job is trying to get the word out; finding ways to get the word out. It seems the biggest way to get the word out is by word of mouth. It is kind of in limbo, because it is hard not to get out in groups.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

On the motion by Mr. Cody, seconded by Mr. Folsom, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the following meetings:

- Monthly Work Session & Regular Meeting June 1, 2020
- Special Called Meeting June 2, 2020
- Special Called Meeting June 15, 2020
- Special Called Meeting June 24, 2020
- Special Called Meeting June 2, 2020
- 2021 SPLOST Negotiation July 8, 2020

**5. Appearances**

**A. Sheriff Dewey – Capital Purchase Request (Vehicle)** – Sheriff Dewey appeared to request capital purchase for a 2013 Chevrolet Tahoe priced at \$15,995 from the dealership in Florida. There were funds allocated in the FY20-21 Budget for six vehicles for the Sheriff's Department, one of which was for the Sheriff; but will be reduced to five. Mr. Folsom made the motion to approve the purchase of the 2013 Tahoe in amount of \$15,995, from dealership in Florida; Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous

**6. New Business**

**A. Public Hearing – Timothy Kelly – Yard Variance** – Ms. Exum made a motion to approve the request from Mr. Timothy Kelly as presented by Mr. Billy Ingram, Inspections and Zoning, for a front yard variance of 28 feet (100-72=28). The property is located at 12986 Moultrie Highway in unincorporated Brooks County. Mr. Folsom seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**B. Purchase Agreement for County Property** – The Board memorialized the agreement to purchase 32.35 acres located on Madison Highway in amount of \$425,000. The closing will be handled by J. D. Burchett Law, LLC. There is a 90-day due diligence period. Mr. Folsom made the motion to approve and execute the contract for the purchase of 32.35 acres on Madison Highway for \$425,000; Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**C. Development Authority Board Member Resignation/Appointment** – The motion was made by Mr. Folsom to accept the resignation of Board Member, Mr. Henry Burton, as a member of the Development Authority Board; Mr. Rowe seconded. Vote was unanimous. Pastor Derren Yearby was appointed to replace Mr. Burton on the Regular Monthly Meeting July 13, 2020

Development Authority Board on the motion by Mr. Folsom; and seconded by Mr. Cody. Vote was unanimous.

**D. Elections Board Member Resignation/Appointment** – The Board appointed Ms. Fannie McDonald to the Elections Board during the January 6, 2020 meeting. There has been no contact since the appointment; and the Elections Board does not have a quorum. Mr. Rowe advised he would contact Ms. McDonald to see if she is still interested. Mr. Cody made the motion, Mr. Rowe seconded, to speak with Ms. McDonald to see if she still have interest in serving on the Elections Board. Vote was unanimous.

**E. SPLOST/TSPLOST Projects Update for Discussion** – Board discussed projects to be used with TSPLOST funds; which included; Jamar Loop, Aikens Road.

**F. Bids – Road Department Equipment and Vehicles; and Vehicles for Sheriff Department and Administration** – Quotes were received for vehicles for the Road Department, Sheriff's Department; and Administration. Quotes were from Hobson Chevrolet-Buick of Cairo, GA; Langdale Ford of Valdosta, GA; and Cass Burch Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep of Quitman, GA. Cass Burch quotes were the lowest bids; and recommended by Mr. Jim Owens, Consultant for Road Department. The quote recommended from Cass Burch is for three (3) 2020 Dodge Ram 2500 trucks in amount of \$29,940 each.

Three bids were received for a Mini Excavator: John Deere of Valdosta (Flint Equipment Company); Yancey Bros. of Valdosta; and Tractor & Equipment of Alabama. John Deere (Flint Equipment Company) had the lowest bid at \$53,500 for a 2020 John Deere 50G Mini Excavator with a two-year extended warranty.

The bids received for six (6) 4X4 Tahoes for the Sheriff Department and one Tahoe for Administration were from: Prince Automotive Group, Valdosta, GA; Cass Burch Chevrolet, Quitman, GA. Cass Burch was the lowest quote at \$38,133 per vehicle for the Police package, and \$41,651 for Non-Police package.

Mr. Folsom made the motion to approve the purchase of three (3) 2020 Dodge Ram 2500 trucks from Cass Burch for the Road Department, Mr. Cody seconded. Chairman asked for any discussion. Mr. Rowe commented that he has not looked at the bids; and they should be looked at as a Board so everyone can look at them. Ms. Exum stated, for the record, that it is unprofessional and all Board Members have not looked at the bids. Administrator commented she did not get the packets until this morning. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Folsom, Mr. Cody; and Chairman voted yes. Ms. Exum and Mr. Rowe voted no. The vote was 3 to 2 to purchase three (3) 2020 Dodge Ram 2500 trucks from Cass Burch at the cost of \$29,940 each, totaling \$89,820.

Mr. Folsom made the motion to approve purchase of the 2020 John Deere 50G Mini Excavator from John Deere (Flint Equipment Company) at cost of \$53,500, Mr. Cody

seconded. Chairman asked for any discussion. Mr. Rowe stated he is without knowledge being he just found out about the purchase. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Folsom, Mr. Cody; and Chairman voted yes. Ms. Exum and Mr. Rowe voted no. The vote was 3 to 2 to purchase the 2020 John Deere 50G Mini Excavator from John Deere (Flint Equipment Company) in the amount of \$53,500.

Mr. Cody made the motion to purchase five (5) Chevrolet Tahoes for the Sheriff Department; and one Chevrolet Tahoe for Administration from Cass Burch Chevrolet; Mr. Folsom seconded. Chairman called for the vote. Mr. Cody, Mr. Folsom; and Chairman voted yes. Ms. Exum and Mr. Rowe voted no. The vote was 3 to 2 to purchase 5 Tahoes for Sheriff Department at cost of \$38,133 each for the Police Package; and \$41,651 for one Non-Police Package for Administration from Cass Burch Chevrolet.

Board discussed the purchase of a Paving Machine; and whether or not it is needed. Ms. Exum made a motion to get cost estimates; Mr. Folsom seconded. Vote was unanimous.

## **7. Unfinished Business**

**A. 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Sanctuary – Sheriff Dewey** - During the February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, Sheriff Dewey presented for discussion the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Sanctuary County Resolution. The Resolution provides that the Brooks County Board of Commissioners affirms its support for the Brooks County Sheriff in the exercise of his sound discretion to not enforce against any citizen an unconstitutional firearms law. During the meeting Sheriff Dewey stated he is requesting the Board's support of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment Sanctuary Resolution. The motion was made by Mr. Folsom, seconded by Mr. Cody, authorizing Chairman's signature and approving the Resolution to Declare Brooks County, Georgia to be A "Second Amendment Sanctuary County", vote was unanimous.

**B. Development Authority IGA** – During the June 24<sup>th</sup> Special Called meeting, the Board discussed the Intergovernmental Agreement and how to fund going forth. Ms. Exum and Administrator met with Development Authority Director, Tiffany Holmes. They looked at the five-year digest to consider their needs and wants. Board discussed the option of providing one-half a mill funding the first year, allow access to fund account and equity saved; and eliminate the current \$75,000 currently funded by the County. First year, Development Authority provide a report annually by November 1 on operating expenses to allow the Board to consider adjusting the millage rate for funding the following year for the remaining term of the five year agreement. Discussion also included putting a one-half mill amount around a number and look at the millage rate every year to adjust their need. On the motion by Ms. Exum, seconded by Mr. Cody; the Board unanimously approved to enter into the Intergovernmental Agreement for Payment of Tax Revenue to Brooks County Development Authority and the mechanism of funding.

**C. East Brooks Contract** – As of July 8, 2020, still waiting for Chief Smith to submit needed financial information to County Attorney for review and recommendations. County Attorney stated he cannot move forward due to lack of information from Chief Smith. On the motion by Ms. Exum, the Board tabled this issue, Mr. Cody seconded. Vote was unanimous.

**D. Brooks County Buildings Lawn Care Services Bid Review**

- a. Harrison's Lawn Service – Darryl Harrison (\$8,400 annually)
- b. Green Grass Lawn Care, LLC – Juan Turner (\$9,600 annually)
- c. Shivers Lawn Care – Tyler Shivers (\$15,120 annually)
- d. Isaac Reynolds, Sr. & Isaac Reynolds, Jr. Landscaping – Isaac Reynolds (\$19,000 annually)

Ms. Exum made the motion to award the bid for lawn care for Brooks County buildings to Green Grass Lawn Care, LLC; Mr. Folsom seconded. The annual fee will be \$9,600, including the Library. Vote was unanimous.

**8. County Administrator Notes/Comments**

**A. Back to School Event (Funding for Fireworks)** – This event has been cancelled.

**B. CARES Act Funding** – Brooks County has been approved to receive funding, in phases, to cover cost for COVID-19.

**C. Updates on Courthouse and AG Building RFQ's** – Excellence Exceeded Consultants has prepared and reviewing contracts; should close this week.

**D. Update on Right of Way Paved Road Cutting RFP** – The RFP will be put out to bid again the end of July 2020.

**E. LMIG 2019 Update** – The RFP has been prepared by County Engineer; submitted to the Quitman Free Press to run for four (4) weeks.

**F. Road Department Superintendent Update** – Administrator has three (3) interviews scheduled for this week.

**9. CALENDAR ITEMS TO NOTE** - None

**Commissioners Notes/Comments**

- **Rheft Rowe - District 1** – Thanked everyone for attending.
- **Patrick Folsom, District 2** – Thanked employees for job well done.

- **Willie Cody, District 3** – Thanked the Road Department and everybody; appreciates what they are doing.
- **Myra Exum, District 4** – Advised everyone to stay safe; 911, EMS, Fire Department. Commented on the appearance of the roads not being mowed; and inquired if any mowing is being done?
- **James Maxwell, District 5** – Commented on the seriousness of COVID-19; and appreciate everyone coming out.

Motion made by Mr. Folsom, Mr. Cody seconded, to close regular meeting and go into executive session at 6:57 pm.

**Executive Session**

Real Estate  
Personnel

No action was taken.

**10. Adjournment** - Mr. Folsom made the motion to adjourn regular meeting at 7:20 p.m.; Ms. Exum seconded.

Mr. James Maxwell, Chairman  
Ms. Jessica McKinney, Administrator  
Ms. Patricia A. Williams, Clerk